

May 2004



# MONTANA GEAR UP

GAINING EARLY AWARENESS & READINESS FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

*Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education / Montana University System*

## GEAR UP



RIGHT CHOICES FOR FUTURE

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## Director's Message: by Sandy Merdinger

I recently had the privilege of calling five outstanding high school seniors to notify them that they are the first recipients of the Montana GEAR UP Pathways Scholarship. I can still hear the excitement in their voices when they heard they were the recipients of scholarships worth up to \$20,000! All of the recipients have worked hard and are certainly deserving of the scholarships. However, the difficult part was selecting only five, as there were several other applicants who also would be worthy of receiving the scholarship. Next year we anticipate awarding at least 15 scholarships.

The Annual Performance Report was sent to the U.S. Department of Education in late April. Thanks to everyone who helped enter data at the schools. That information was an integral part of our report. As laborious as it was to compile the data and put together the report, one of the enjoyable outcomes was to see all of the GEAR UP activities taking place in the schools. We will take that information, compile it and disseminate it. This will give you some new ideas to try in your program. There are so many good and diverse activities taking place in our GEAR UP schools!

As we begin to wind down year five of the GEAR UP grant, we are already in the midst of completing our workplan for year six of the program. We are excited to continue to improve our service to schools and help move forward the goals of GEAR UP across the state. During year six we will be writing a new grant for continued GEAR UP funding. Although there are unanswered questions, we are optimistic Montana GEAR UP will continue and most important, that our students will be given opportunities to improve their academic performance as well as increase their educational aspirations. Thanks to all of you for your good work. I have truly enjoyed working with you this year and look forward to next year! In the meantime, have a wonderful summer!

This July, Montana GEAR UP will be very well represented at the National GEAR UP Conference in Washington D.C. Representatives include two GEAR UP school administrators, two counselors, and two liaisons who were selected to be sponsored by the state GEAR UP office. They are: Joel Voytoski, Superintendent of Evergreen Schools; Clair Rasmussen, Principal from Charlo High School; Bob Malmberg, Counselor from Evergreen Middle School; Birdie Real Bird, Counselor from Hardin High School; Juanita Roasting Stick, Liaison at Rocky Boy School; Linda Borntrager, Liaison and Teacher from Bloomfield School. From Montana GEAR UP Roger Barber, Sandy Merdinger, Peter Butler, Everall Fox and Kelly Hert will attend and from MGSLP Karen Wing and Tina Wagner. Tina is presenting at this year's conference about the financial aid presentations she does for our schools. Renee Boisseau, Principal at Kila School will also be attending but has chosen to travel on her school budget. We can all look forward to hearing about what they learned at our fall conference.

## National GEAR UP Conference:

## GEAR UP Essay Contest, Achievement Grant, & GEAR UP Pathways Scholarship winners!

As this is the final newsletter of the school year, it is appropriate to honor and give recognition to all of our GEAR UP students that participated in and won essay contest awards, achievement grants or the Montana GEAR UP Pathways scholarship. This year we received 1426 essays, 224 achievement grant applications, and 24 GEAR UP Pathways scholarship applications. We awarded 70 \$200 US savings bonds to 7th and 8th grade essay contest winners, 75 \$250 Scholarships to 9th-12th graders, 191 \$1000 achievement grants and five \$20,000 GEAR UP Pathways scholarships. The value of these awards combined totals \$323,750! Following is a list of this years winners. Be sure to congratulate them when you see them!

### 7th & 8th Grade Essay Contest Winners:

School	Name	Grade	School	Name	Grade
<b>Box Elder</b>	Lanaya Eagleman	7	<b>Heart Butte (Cont.)</b>	Matthew Day Chief	8
	Tylyn Whitford	7			
	Bernida Denny	8			
	Cassie Denny	8			
	Michael Eagleman	8			
	Courtney St. Pierre	8			
<b>Brady</b>	Mystic Opie	7	<b>Lincoln</b>	Randie Brady	7
				Caleb Gardner	7
<b>Browning</b>	Bonita Murillo	7		Angelina Medel	8
	ShyAnn Raining Bird	7		Tana Rutecki	8
	Amy Running Fisher	7			
	Theo Windy Robert Old Chief	7	<b>Arrowhead</b>	Kate Hall	7
	Kyle Holmes	8		Angelina Masson	7
	Malorie Uphem	8		Kayla Correa	8
	Katherine Whitford	8		Tim Weber	8
	Megan YellowOwl	8			
			<b>Rocky Boy</b>	Lanaya Eagleman	7
<b>Charlo</b>	Cara Gravagno	7		Tylyn Whitford	7
	Sydney Normandeau	7		Michael Eagleman	8
	Brittany Dougherty	8		Cassre Denny	8
	Kristina Hightshoe	8			
			<b>Ronan</b>	Sammi Brooks	8
<b>Evergreen</b>	Tony Crabill	7		Kimberly Patten	8
	Brittany Ferguson	7			
	Rachelle Gronley	8	<b>St. Ignatius</b>	Rachael Burda	7
	Matt Welch	8		Kelsey Cable	7
				Robia Conko	8
				Sadie Frey	8
<b>Hardin</b>	Taylor Brien	7			
	Jessica Joyce	7	<b>Vaughn</b>	Stephanie Hughes	7
	Joelle Link	7		Moriah Rushton	7
	Vanessa Old Coyote	7		Johna Cabarett	8
	Juanita Buckley	8		Angie Losleben	8
	Sarah Norby	8			
	Kenzie Robertson	8			
	Stena Troyer	8	<b>Wibaux</b>	Danikka Harrell	7
				Samantha Qualley	7
<b>Harlem</b>	Mickey Kalbeck	7		Andrew Barthel	8
	AJ LongSoldier	7		Lauren LaBar	8
	Rick Haluszk	8			
	Miles Werk	8	<b>Winnett</b>	Sam Dembek	7
				Shy Iverson	7
<b>Heart Butte</b>	Mountain Blue BullShoe	7		Kylie Marie King	8
	Abby Dusty Bull	7		Mandy McKenna	8
	Tiffany Bullshoe	8			

## 9th-12 Grade Essay Contest Winners:

School	Name	Grade	School	Name	Grade
Bloomfield	Matthew Kanagy	11	Heart Butte (cont.)	Jess Crawford	11
				Stephanie Last Star	12
Box Elder	Whitney Geboe	9			
	Frankie Henderson	10	Kalispell	Benjamin Allen	9
	Nina Demontiney	11		Vanessa Maycumber	10
	Chavonne Parker	11		Kathleen Reavis	10
				Jeremiah Allen	11
Brady	Cassie Campbell	9	Lame Deer	Elisa Jefferson	9
	Tricia Tothill	10		Kaycee Martinez	10
	Raelee Bishop	11		George Nightwalker	11
	Nick Garcia	12		Reasco Killsnight	12
Browning	Taylor Bear Medicine	9	Lincoln	Joshua Tankersley	9
	Carlissa No Runner	9		Nic Cuyle	10
	Kelli Parsons	9		Christy Heisler	11
	Becky Pilgeram	9		Kimberly Tankersley	12
	Noel Stewart	9			
	Nathaniel Vielle	9	Livingston	Katie Redfield	9
	Gillean Arnoux	10		Alan Kinkie	10
	Sorel Diamant-Rink	10		Katherine Foster	11
	Braylee Kennerly	10		Suzanna Spanning	12
	Bradley Petersen	10			
	Jessie Scott	10	Rocky Boy	Frankie Henderson	10
	Morgana Tailfeathers	10		Chavonne Parker	11
	Misty Keller	11		CeCe Corcoran	12
	Ryan Running Crane	11			
			Ronan	Michael Courville	9
Charlo	Jason Foust	9		Britney Maddox	10
	Kayla Garrigus	10		Jennifer Danielson	11
	Donita Carter	11		Anitra Whitford	12
	Jasmine Ray	12			
			St. Ignatius	Ashley Mitchell	9
Hardin	Arielle Lyster	9		Alisha Sheridan	10
	Brooke Ostahowski	9		Ben Lipscomb	11
	Sloane Real Bird	9		Seth Potter	12
	Allison York	9			
	Josh Billin	10	Vaughn	Danielle Hall	9
	Minato Knudson	10		Calvin Thompson	10
	Joshua LaForge	10		Lana Finstad	12
	Johnna Snell	10			
	Rae Howe	11	Wibaux	Brittney Beach	9
	Geoffry Willhardt	11		Rikki Bacon	10
				Austin Domek	11
Harlem	Chelsea McCann	11			
			Winnett	Malori Woodford	9
Heart Butte	Jeremy Comes At Night	9		Anna Dembek	10
	Joe Crawford	10		Carl Kimmel	12

# 11th Grade Achievement Grant Winners:

School	Name	School	Name	School	Name
<b>Arrowhead</b>	Katherine Foster		Dayson Mathison		Rachael Wild Gun
<b>Bloomfield</b>	Matthew Kanagy		Danielle Newton		Lyle Wild Gun
	Daniel Whitmer		Nichole Peters	<b>Kila</b>	Jeremiah Allen
<b>Box Elder</b>	Yolanda Ereaux		Renae Roush		Quincy Moore
<b>Brady</b>	Raelee Bishop		Kyle Schweigert	<b>Lame Deer</b>	Naomi Limberhand
	Ashley Clayton		Stephanie Sherman		Myron Seminole
	Tricia Tothill		Elizabeth Shields		Cinnamon Spear
	Ashleigh Tranmer		Robert Smithlin	<b>Lincoln</b>	Janelle Talawyman
	Tera Tranmer	<b>Hardin</b>	Taylor Arnold		Nicole Blancher
<b>Browning</b>	Anthony Boyce		Jeffrey Brokaw Jr.		Amanda Cyr
	Crystal Butterfly		Solomon Bull Shows		Christine Heisler
	Roseline Cadotte		Tyler Carleton		Richard Keaster
	Tristinia Calf Boss Ribs		Michael Chavez		Becky Mailloux
	Robert Coleman		Michael Doyle		Chase Tams
	Les Costel		Brett Evertz	<b>Rocky Boy</b>	Renata Youngquist
	JoenaEagle Feathers		Ty Fisher		Jamie Anderson
	Kendall Edmo		Tyson Fitzpatrick		Aldean Denny
	Malisha Goggles		Erin Flack		Cole Henderson
	Robert Hall		Jennifer Fruichantie		Tiffany Houle
	Ashly Heavy Runner		Racanna Howe		Rebekah Jarvey
	Tyler Hoyt		Vinnett Jefferson		Alpeus Jones
	Misty Keller		Chelsey Johnson		Kelly Morsette
	Braylee Kennerly		Jamie Kenney		Tony Russette
	Jerrica Lunak		Leslie Kindness		Chelsey St. Pierre
	Allen Mad Plume		Sarah Larimer (Emigh)		Brittany St. Pierre
	Spencer Mad Plume		Darci Matovich		Deidra Sunchild
	George Madman		Mallory Minnick		Dwight Sunchild
	Misty New Robe		Jameson Morton		Donny Top Sky
	Coley Potts		Marcus Old Coyote		Marty Watson
	Tessa Racine		Chelsey Old Elk		Upton Whitford
	Eve Rider		Jamie Old Elk		Chad Wolf Child
	Carla Rider		Savannah Old Elk	<b>St. Ignatius</b>	Bill Watson
	McKenzie Rides At The Door		Paige Ostabowski		Zachary Allen
	Nicholas Rink		Cabbrina Phelan		Daniel Ashley
	Christopher Rock		Callie Robertson		Amanda Couch
	Chaniel Running Crane		Brydget Rogers		Mark Davidson
	Keith Running Crane		Elena Russell		Brinton Dinnell
	Tracie Rutherford		Kathleen Schaak		Trista Ebensteiner
	Joseph Rutherford		Amanda Schneider		Ian Fleming
	Christopher Schildt		Matthew Schreiner		Lacy Frey
	Ali Smith		Carla Seder		Chase Hakes
	Myalyn Spoonhunter		Drew Smith		Lynsey Inmee
	Latrice Tatsey		Anna Stops		Robert Larson
	Jonnalea Tatsey		Mathew Torske		Tiffany Leishman
	Misty Tatsey		Adrian Wagner		Ben Lipscomb
	Isaiah Webber		Jessica Wemple		Peter Lumpry
	Loris Whiteman		Geoffry Willhardt		Faith Matt
<b>Charlo</b>	Temper Whitford	<b>Harlem</b>	Melinda Cochran		Michaellynn McClure
	Corina Ambrose		Dianna First Raised		Whitney McCollum
	Tomi Bick		Sharana Gonzales		Phylicia McDonald
	Jacob Hanson		Chelsea McCann		Levi Morigeau
	Brenna Hyvonen		Marty Stiffarm		Tarn Potter
	Jade Kost	<b>Hays-Lodge Pole</b>	Latricia Ramirez		Kaitlin Roddam
	Kyle Middlemist	<b>Heart Butte</b>	Lyle AimsBack		Darlett Thackeray
	Shea Sammons		Edwin Champine		Courtney Wheeler
<b>Evergreen</b>	Mandy Barrett		Martin Connelly		Lane Wheeler
	Brandon Bauer		Hannah Goings	<b>Wibaux</b>	Laura Wheeler
	Eric Connolly		Maria Kittson		Ted Bacon
	Nikki Davis		Stephanie Morgan		Amanda Begger
	Gabriel Dawson		Wacey Mountain Chief		Austin Domek
	Jennifer Fallon		Scott Raining Bird		Allyssa Harrell
	Christopher Forsman		Ronnie Spearson		Adam Arthur
	Kimberly Hall		Lyman Tailfeathers		Katherine Hill
	Jennifer Harbin		Jeston Wells		

## **Montana GEAR UP/Pathways Scholarship Winners:**

Montana GEAR UP is very honored to announce the winners of the very first round of Montana GEAR UP Pathways Scholarship recipients. In all, 24 applications were submitted from which the selection committee had the difficult task of selecting five winners. Congratulations go out to:

**Jason Daugherty** from Charlo, MT who will be attending The University of Montana in the fall where he will study forestry and hopes to eventually pursue a masters degree in wildlife biology. Jason is a member of the National Honor Society, a student council representative and a Boys State Delegate in 2003.

**Constance Menard** from Box Elder, MT who will be attending The University of Montana in the fall where she will study forensic psychology. Constance was the class president for all four years in high school and a member of the National Honor Society.

**Jacob Eshelman** from Lincoln, MT who will be attending Montana State University in the fall where he intends to study animal and range science. Jacob's work in treating laminitis in horses has received attention from around the country.

**Wesley Dembek** from Roundup, MT who will be attending Montana State University in the fall where he intends to study construction engineering technology. Wesley has been a member of the National Honor Society since 2001 and was a Boys State Delegate in 2003.

**Scott Flat Lip** from Pryor, MT who will be attending Montana State University-Billings, College of Technology in the fall where he intends to study metal fabrication technology. Scott has become a well known disc jockey on the Crow Indian Reservation, and has performed live on Native American radio.

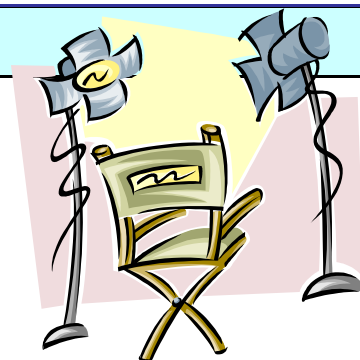
### **The GEAR UP Spotlight: St. Ignatius**

## **St. Ignatius Student Achievements:**

Three GEAR UP juniors have received full scholarships to attend an Outward Bound leadership adventure on the east coast. They will spend two weeks canoeing and backpacking through the Appalachians learning valuable leadership skills and bonding with their classmates. St. Ignatius GEAR UP has partnered with 21<sup>st</sup> Century and Expeditionary Learning to provide this great opportunity. Upon their return, it is hoped that the three students will provide greater student leadership to the school as a whole.

The Spring Career Days sent St. Ignatius students across western Montana exploring opportunities available in higher education. The freshmen traveled to Flathead Valley Community College, the sophomores to Carroll College and the University of Montana's Helena College of Technology, and the juniors to Montana Tech. The fully attended event is arranged by both GEAR UP and the St. Ignatius School-To-Work program. In the fall, these two groups arrange the Fall Career Day and also manage the student portfolio system for the school.

St. Ignatius Schools are excited to have 25 Juniors receiving Achievement Grants this year and all of the recipients look forward to competing for the Pathways Scholarship next year. Congratulations Juniors!



## The GEAR UP Spotlight: Browning

### **Browning AIBL Chapter Places in National Competition:**

The Browning High School Chapter of the American Indian Business Leaders (AIBL), or as we call ourselves “Blackfeet Rez-preneurs” sent 10 students and 5 chaperones, (2 of which were volunteer parents Marilyn Parsons and Tony Wagner) to attend the 10<sup>th</sup> annual AIBL National Leadership Conference. This year the conference was held in Las Vegas, Nevada, at the MGM Grand in April.



The conference included two competitive sections where schools competed in their respective categories in the business and chapter competitions. Browning placed first in the high school category of the business competition, winning \$500. Two students, Thomas Coleman and Coy Harwood, partnered to submit a business plan on their business “Coleman Woodworking” which features hand-lathed items such as pens, pencils, toys and key chains. The students placed second winning \$250. Another exciting honor was that Melanie Magee won “Advisor of the Year” and was given a nice plaque and a beautiful Pendleton bag.

AIBL is a national non-profit organization set up to promote entrepreneurial and leadership skills among K-16 students. Presently, there are over 50 chapters nationwide, with Browning being the only community with 3 chapters; they are at the middle school, high school and college level. The headquarters of AIBL is at the University of Montana in Missoula. Any school interested in starting a chapter can go to [www.aibl.org](http://www.aibl.org) or contact the national office at (406) 243-4879. You can also contact Melanie Magee at [melaniem@bps.k12.mt.us](mailto:melaniem@bps.k12.mt.us), or (406) 338-2745, ext. 387 for more information.

### **Montana School Counselors Association Conference Report:**

The Montana School Counselor Association hosted their annual School Counseling Institute in Bozeman on May 6th and 7th. Over 230 attendees participated in two days of break out sessions that covered topics from prevention and intervention of bullying in schools to drug use among adolescents in Montana. Lance Foster and Tina Wagner from the Montana Guaranteed Student Loan Program also presented on the sessions they do for GEAR UP schools. The institute was highlighted by the current president of the American School Counselor Association, Dr. Russell A. Sabella. GEAR UP staff heard nothing but good comments from attendees about the conference, and all agreed that the sessions were excellent.

- This is the final newsletter for this school year.
- Now is a good time to give consideration to improvements you want to make and include in next year's Implementation Plan. Plans for 2004-2005 are due August 31, 2004.

### **May Reminders:**



- Final Program Reports for this year are due June 11, 2004. Final Fiscal Reports are due September 30, 2004.
- Award letters for 2004-2005 will be mailed in June.
- This newsletter is also available on the web! Visit us at: [www.gearup.montana.edu](http://www.gearup.montana.edu)
- Have a great summer!!!



## **School Grants Update:**

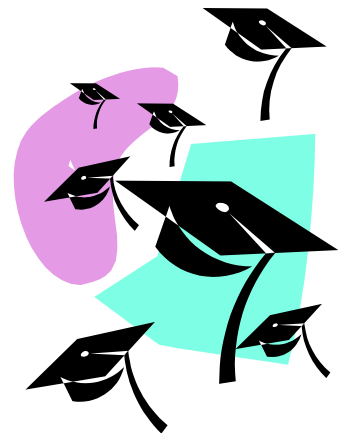
The end of the school year is fast upon us, and there is still much to be accomplished and be thinking about for year six. In June you will be receiving award letters for the 2004-2005 school year. The award letters will include very specific expectations and guidelines for the coming year, so be sure to read them carefully.

Implementation Plans for 2004-2005 will also be sent with the award letters so schools have some time to consider what they would like to accomplish next year in relation to GEAR UP goals and objectives. The form will be very similar to the one this year, yet more attention will be given to the narrative sections to insure that there are specific and measurable goals for next year. Although plans are not due until August 31, 2004, now is a good time for administrators, counselors and liaisons to get together and discuss what areas of need you seek to improve next year.

Planning is also underway for the Annual GEAR UP Fall Conference. The dates are tentatively set for September 20-21. We have received many great ideas from the field for this year's conference and anticipate a super event. Plan on bringing your school administrator, counselor and liaison. This is a requirement that will be spelled out in the award letter you sign and return. Also, please let us know if you have any other suggestions or topics that you would like to see addressed at this year's conference.

Before everyone scatters for the summer to recharge their batteries, don't forget that final program reports for the current year are due by June 11, 2004. Final fiscal reports are due by September 30, 2004. This is the last newsletter until August.

Hope you have a great summer!



There were 15 liaisons in attendance at the meeting May 5th in Bozeman. It was a long day with a full agenda, but the chance to congregate with peers from all over Montana is always worthwhile and the group planning for next year is invaluable.

## **Liaisons Meeting Report:**

Updates from state GEAR UP staff were provided on scholarships, summer programs, assessment data, parental involvement, the fall conference and more. Liaisons were split into two groups and alternated between two different focus groups to explore college visits and sixth year planning. In the afternoon we had two guest speakers that presented ideas on how we can assist our graduates as they prepare to go to college. Mary Lukin, the Director of the ABC program at Montana State University discussed last minute strategies for preparing seniors, and presented a folio for college that is given to incoming freshman that take part in their program. The folio contains information on academic calendars, how to select a college, admission procedures, financial aid and scholarship sources, student housing, registration, medical and insurance information and campus support services.

Dr. James McMillan, a professor working on assignment for President Geoff Gamble to increase Native American enrollment and retention, presented information about the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program. AVID is an in-school academic support program for grades 5-12 that prepares students for college eligibility and success. Several GEAR UP programs across the country support AVID in their schools.

## 10 Important things to do if you want to succeed in your first year of college:

1. Set two or three realistic goals for (a) your first semester, (b) your first year.
2. Do whatever it takes to attend summer orientation. Don't wait until August if you can possibly help it. Know what your classes are going to be well ahead of time. Begin with classes that you feel confident about taking.
3. Learn the basic layout of the campus and how to find buildings and rooms.
4. Spend time searching the web— a wealth of information about any school can be found on the web.
5. Make sure your admission and financial aid are in order by no later than the end of June.
6. Know where you're going to be living.
7. Find out ahead of time the process for buying books— how to know which ones you need, and how you'll pay for them.
8. Find out where you can get help before you need it.
9. Give careful thought to your major and your advisor. Advisors WANT to help you succeed. Don't be afraid to ask for help.
10. Get a planner and learn how to use it. Study important dates and deadlines, especially fee payment, add deadline, drop deadline, registration period for next semester, etc.



Compiled by Ray Carlisle & Darlene Samson, Educational Opportunity Program, The University of Montana

Do you know some one that would like to be added to the newsletter distribution list? Please let us know!

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National GEAR UP website:  
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